

# **Housing and City Development Scrutiny Committee**

## **15 April 2024**

### **Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan – Scope and Content**

#### **1 Purpose**

- 1.1 This report gives an overview of the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan (GNSP), which will cover the geographic area of Broxtowe Borough Council, Gedling Borough Council, Nottingham City Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council. Once adopted, it will form part of the Council's statutory Development Plan and will be part of its formal Policy Framework. The structure and key content of the draft GNSP is outlined below.

#### **2 Why a Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan?**

- 2.1 The GNSP is a voluntary arrangement between the local plan-making Local Authorities. It would be possible for each council to prepare a single Local Plan for their area. However, it has been agreed that there is significant benefit in having a consistent and coherent strategic planning policy approach across the area. This has the additional benefit of providing certainty for users of the planning system across Greater Nottingham and reducing the need for developers to negotiate with councils separately. Working in partnership also brings very significant cost savings, for instance through shared commissioning of evidence-base studies, and with just one public examination of the Plan required instead of four.

#### **3 Strategic Plan Content**

- 3.1 Prior to its adoption, the GNSP is required to go through a number of formal and informal consultations. The Publication Draft GNSP represents the first formal stage of preparation. All of the consultation responses received as a result of the earlier consultations have been used to inform and shape the GNSP as it has evolved. The Publication Draft GNSP will contain a Vision statement, setting out the intended character of the plan area and describing what it will look like in 2041 (the end date of the GNSP). This Vision includes key strategic issues such as climate change, enhancing Blue and Green Infrastructure, improving access to homes and jobs and the distribution of development. It is based on current and future trends of key aspects such as population and economy. GNSP objectives flow from the Vision, establishing the way in which the plan area will deal with the identified key issues. The draft Vision can be found at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The proposed Planning Strategy follows on from the Vision and Objectives and confirms the focus on urban living through prioritising sites within the main built-up area and, to a lesser extent, those areas adjoining it, seeking to achieve sustainable growth by making the most of existing infrastructure and reducing the need to travel. This approach utilises the range of facilities and

services that are provided within Nottingham and other town centres, and will provide opportunities to redevelop brownfield sites and drive regeneration of parts of the urban area.

- 3.3 The settlement hierarchy set out in the proposed Planning Strategy consists of:
- the main built-up area of Nottingham;
  - adjacent to the Sub-Regional Centre of Hucknall (for Gelding Borough); and
  - the Key Settlements (for the Districts, such as Calverton and Bingham).
- 3.4 The settlement hierarchy reflects the role and size of urban areas and sets the preferred sequence for site development. Nottingham and its built-up area is of national and regional importance in terms of its size and economy. The Sub-Regional Centre of Hucknall (in Ashfield District) is relatively large and has its own distinct identity and economic role. The Key Settlements have been locally defined based on their role, function and planning policy considerations. Outside of the Key Settlements, development at other settlements will be of a smaller scale, which will be defined in the Part 2 Local Plan.

## Housing

- 3.5 In terms of the approach to housing need, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms that the Government's standard method for assessing local housing need should be the starting point for determining the minimum number of homes required, unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach. The standard method uses household projections and affordability factors to arrive at a figure for each Local Authority. It does not take into account housing supply or other planning constraints, such as Green Belt. Nottingham is one of the 20 largest urban Local Authorities in the country so, accordingly, the standard method applies an arbitrary 35% uplift to its housing need.
- 3.6 In common with many of the 20 largest urban areas, Nottingham does not have the capacity to meet the entirety of its need once the 35% uplift has been added, so the Publication Draft GNSP will be based on the anticipated housing land supply over the plan period. Due to Green Belt constraints, the other partners have not agreed to provide for any of Nottingham's unmet need, so housing targets for the District and Borough Councils are based on meeting their standard method housing need. A housing target of 26,685 will be provided for Nottingham, and a housing need for the Greater Nottingham as a whole of 52,710 homes (this may change slightly, as the standard method is updated annually). This housing target for Nottingham compares to the Government's standard method calculation of 32,868, leaving a theoretical shortfall of 6,183 homes.
- 3.7 Across the Greater Nottingham area, most of the planned housing growth is already included in existing Local Plans. In line with sustainability principles and the settlement hierarchy, as much housing as is feasible will be located

within and adjoining the main built-up area of Nottingham. The GNSP will only consider larger sites of 500 homes or more as all other sites will be allocated through a review of the City Council's Land and Planning Policies Document (Part 2 of the Local Plan). For Nottingham, these include the Boots site (where development has commenced for 600 homes – 207 within Nottingham and the remainder within Broxtowe), Stanton Tip for 500 homes (carried forward from the existing Aligned Core Strategy) and the wider Broad Marsh area where up to 1,000 new homes could be provided.

## **Employment**

- 3.8 In terms of employment needs and to fulfil the requirements of the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance, an Employment Land Needs Study was undertaken (Nottingham Core Housing Market Area and Nottingham Outer Housing Market Area Employment Land Needs Study, Lichfields, May 2021). It used a variety of scenarios to assess a range of employment space needs for both industrial/warehousing space and office floorspace.
- 3.9 Based on this analysis, it was concluded that the regeneration scenario is the most appropriate level of growth to plan future requirements. This matches the aspirations of the D2N2 Local Economic Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan, will assist in ongoing economic recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic and will help counter the likely impacts on the economy predicted for the early years of the GNSP period. Due to constrained boundaries and a lack of available sites, Nottingham is unable to provide for the full identified industrial and warehousing need, however, provision in the other Local Authority areas offsets this. The converse is true for office development, with Nottingham providing for part of the identified needs of the other partners, principally within the city centre.
- 3.10 In addition, the Nottinghamshire Core and Outer Housing Market Area Logistics Study (July 2022) was commissioned to quantify the scale of strategic distribution and logistics (Use Class 'B8') need across the Core/Outer Nottingham Housing Market Areas. The partners have undertaken a 'call' for strategic distribution sites and the approach to large-scale distribution sites includes allocations at Ratcliffe-on-Soar (Rushcliffe) and at Bennerley (Broxtowe).
- 3.11 The Preferred Approach recognises that all uses that generate employment, such as retail, health, education and civic/science-based institutions, should be catered for. It identifies strategic locations for business, including Nottingham city centre. Economic development will also be encouraged associated with universities, hospital campuses and Further Education sites.

## **Other Strategic Policies**

- 3.12 The Strategic Plan contains a range of other policies to ensure consistency across Greater Nottingham. These are:

- Climate Change, Sustainable Design, Construction and Energy and Managing Flood Risk, which seeks to ensure development is resilient to and mitigates the effects of climate change. It will assist in moving toward the City Council's Carbon Neutral 2028 ambition.
- The Green Belt, which seeks to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development.
- Nottingham City Centre, which provides the strategic framework for ensuring the ongoing vitality and viability of the city centre, including the redevelopment of Broad Marsh.
- The Role of Town and Local Centres, which defines the hierarchy and network of centres and provides the strategic framework for ensuring the ongoing vitality and viability of other centres in Greater Nottingham.
- Housing Size, Mix and Choice, which provides guidance on the size type and tenure of new homes to be provided, including affordable housing.
- Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, which provides the criteria for councils and applicants to consider when allocating or promoting new sites.
- Design and Enhancing Local Identity, which seeks to ensure new development is of a high design standard and appropriate to its location.
- The Historic Environment, which seeks to preserve and enhance the historic environment and ensure the historic environment is appropriately respected where new development has an impact on historic assets.
- Local Services and Healthy Lifestyles, which seeks to protect existing facilities, and ensure new development is served by appropriate new or enhanced facilities.
- Culture, Tourism and Sport, which sets out the strategic approach to provision of new facilities.
- Managing Travel Demand, which seeks to ensure new development is served by appropriate transport modes and facilities, prioritising active travel and public transport.
- Transport Infrastructure Priorities, which safeguards and promotes strategic transport measures and schemes required to mitigate the impact of new development.
- Green Infrastructure, Parks and Open Space, which seeks to ensure new development provides adequate open space and in particular contributes to the network of Blue and Green Infrastructure across Greater Nottingham.

- Biodiversity, which sets out how the councils will protect and enhance biodiversity and how the requirement for a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain will be implemented in Greater Nottingham.
- Infrastructure and Contributions, which sets out the nature of developer contributions to be sought through Section 106 agreements, or through Community Infrastructure Levy, where this exists.

#### **4 Adoption Process**

- 4.1 Following publication and consultation, Local Plans must be submitted to the Secretary of State for a public examination to determine whether the Plan is sound. An independent Planning Inspector will be appointed to undertake the examination, which involves both written evidence and public hearing sessions. The Inspector will consider if 'main modifications' are required to make the GNSP sound, and if so, these are subject to further consultation. The Inspector will then issue a report into the soundness of the GNSP and, if found sound, it can be adopted by the City Council and its partners.
- 4.2 Once adopted, the GNSP will form part of the City Council's statutory Development Plan, and Planning applications must be determined in accordance with it unless material considerations indicate otherwise.